



For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
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President Bush and President Mogae Remarks in Exchange of Toasts

Gabarone International Convention Centre
Gaborone, Botswana

 [Audio](#)

12:30 P.M. (L)

PRESIDENT MOGAE: The President of the United States, Mr. George W. Bush, and First Lady, Mrs. Laura Welch Bush; Your Lordship, the Chief Justice and Mrs. Nganunu; the Honorable Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly and Mrs. Temane; honorable members of the Cabinet from the United States and from Botswana; distinguished ladies and gentlemen.

I'm delighted to once again welcome you to Botswana, Mr. President, and members of your high delegation. It is an honor and a privilege on behalf of the government and people of Botswana to thank you for honoring us with a visit, and for your pro-African initiatives on AIDS and trade.

This visit, the second of its kind by a President of the United States is, indeed, a welcome gesture of the friendship that exists between our countries. The United States and Botswana have enjoyed many years of fruitful and beneficial relations.



Recently, when Botswana appealed to the United States for help in the fight against HIV/AIDS, you not only increased the funding for the BOTUSA testing and counseling program, but also restored the Peace Corps program to mitigate the human resources constrained.

Our country, together with Namibia, has also been given special treatment under the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act, AGOA. In spite of the fact that Botswana graduated from the least developed country status several years ago, you, Mr. President, gave us a special dispensation which allows us to use third country fabrics to produce textile goods for export to the U.S. market.

I am happy to say that, as in many other African countries, many jobs have been created for Botswana. We deeply appreciate your decision and are determined to maximize the benefits under this

dispensation.

The assistance and cooperation we have received clearly demonstrates that in the United States, Botswana has a true and dependable partner. Mr. President, we also welcome your administration's encouragement of and collaboration with your country's private sector in the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic in sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, and in Botswana, in particular.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, may I now ask you to join me in drinking a toast to the continued good health and happiness of the President of the United States, Mr. George W. Bush, and First Lady, Mrs. Laura Bush; to continued friendship and cooperation between Botswana and the United States of America; and, of course, to international peace and security for which the President stands.

To the President.

(A toast was delivered.)

PRESIDENT MOGAE: Pulah. (Applause.)

PRESIDENT BUSH: Well, thank you very much, Mr. President, for your warm words of welcome, and for your friendship and your hospitality. And thank you, Madam First Lady, as well, for the hospitality that you've shown Laura and me. We're delighted to make our first visit to Botswana and to see the vast and rich beauty of your country.

The United States and Botswana share many beliefs. We believe that democratic government provides the best protections for human dignity. We believe that political and economic liberty go together, and that prosperity is another word for economic freedom. Botswana is known for the strength of your democracy and for the vigor of your economy. And that's a tribute to the leadership of President Mogae and his administration. You have demonstrated sure, sound economic management and fiscal discipline, and a commitment to free market principles. You have shown that you can build a nation's prosperity and transform the lives of its people.



And your trade policies, Mr. President, are also ensuring strong commerce between Botswana and the United States, which will only grow in years ahead.

Botswana is also directly confronting HIV/AIDS and taking bold steps to overcome this crisis. We applaud your leadership. The people of this nation have the courage and the resolve to defeat this disease, and you will have a partner in the United States of America. (Applause.)

My country is acting to help all of Africa in turning the tide against AIDS. This is the deadliest enemy

Africa has ever faced and you will not face this enemy alone.

Together, our two nations are determined to build an Africa that is growing in peace, in prosperity and in hope. So let us toast to the enduring friendship between the United States and the Republic of Botswana.

Mr. President, to your health, and to your country's success.

(A toast was delivered.) (Applause.)

END 12:35 P.M. (L)

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